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Abernathy says Ray 8-11-78

aided by FBI in escape

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (UPI) — Dr. Ralph Abernathy, successor to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the civil rights movement, said in an interview published Thursday he believes the FBI and Memphis police helped "conspirators" spirit James Earl Ray from Memphis after King was killed in 1968.

In an interview Wednesday with The Commercial Appeal, Abernathy, who was with King when he died, said he is prepared to testify about the accusations Monday when he goes before the first public hearing of a House com-

mittee investigating King's assassination.

Ray, who was sentenced to 99 years in prison after he pleaded guilty to the King slaying, is also scheduled to testify before the committee in Washington. He is seeking a new trial.

The civil rights leader said he believes Ray was aided by the FBI and Memphis police in his escape.

"IF GIVEN a new trial he would reveal the names and information that would lead the police to the real killers of Martin Luther King," Abernathy said.



Associated Press Wirephoto.

Dr. Ralph Abernathy . . . president emeritus of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.